

# Special 1992 Employment Issue

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ear Readers:

As summer approaches, many students look ahead to a new life with a new degree while others seek temporary summer employment. With the nation in the middle of a recession and economic doomsayers reporting a sluggish job market, the *Gateway* is providing tips for upcoming graduates ready to seek employment.

The 1992 Summer Employment Issue features articles dealing with business fashion, interviewing, writing a cover letter, the job market and much more.

The *Gateway* would like to take the opportunity to thank all the supporters who helped put this issue together (regardless of the late-April snow storm) and to congratulate all of the up-coming graduates.

*The 1992 Spring Gateway Staff*

## Clarifications:

The Student Senate resolution requesting a special committee to look into impeaching all members of the Student Court for malfeasance of office was initiated due to the investigation of a grievance filed by Andria Palmesano, not Michael Kennedy, as was stated in the April 21 *Gateway*.

Also, the Education Expo '92 will be Sunday at UNO. In the April 21 *Gateway*, this information was inadvertently omitted.

In addition, the April 21 issue masthead should have said Tuesday, not Friday.

The *Gateway* regrets any confusion these errors may have caused.

# Inside this issue ...

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Letters must be signed using the first and last name or initials and the last name. Letters must include the writer's address and phone number although this information will not be published. Letters to the editor exceeding two typed pages will not be considered for publication.



# PREPARING FOR THE JOB...



—Photo illustration by Eric Franks

Body language is an important aspect of the interview. Frowning, slouching and turning away from the interviewer closes communication and should be avoided during interviews.

## Selling yourself takes marketing skills

By Anna J. Edwards

Many people put themselves through school by working in sales. Cashiers, servers and telemarketers all sell a product. But how do you sell yourself? This is what a person does in a job interview.

Many factors contribute to a good interview — dress, posture, education and others.

Clemm Kessler, a management and human resources consultant for Kessler and Associates consulting firm in Omaha, gave some tips on interviewing.

**Attire**— Dress appropriately for the employer. If applying for a white collar job, dress in white collar clothes, such as a business suit.

"If you must make a mistake in your dress, let it be that you were too conservative," Kessler said.

**Body Language** — Kessler noted two rules: Never be artificial in your gestures or facial expressions, and do things to open communication instead of to close it down.

Smiling, being animated and leaning forward open communication.

Frowning, slouching and turning away close communication.

**Resumes** — Resumes are important because they represent applicants when they are not there, but resumes are not the most important tool in an interview, Kessler said.

Follow-up calls are just as important as sending the resume

See Interviews, page 11

## Resumes need tailoring to fit

By Scott Dingfield

If preparing one resume seems like a monumental task, Nancy Nish has some bad news: more than one is needed.

"Each resume should be tailored to the specific position applied for. One resume will not do it all," said Nish, director of UNO's Career Planning and Placement Services.

Career Planning and Placement Services will help any student or alumni draft a resume or cover letter, Nish said.

Career Planning and Placement's services are free to UNO students on an appointment basis, and will help job seekers present themselves properly to prospective employers, Nish said.

The office will help students present their abilities in terms of what an employer is looking for.

"You don't want to underestimate your ability," Nish said.

Preparing a resume properly is one aspect of presenting yourself well, Nish said. A resume is an overview of a person's education and experience, and gets the person an interview.

When starting to write a resume, analyze skills, personal achievements, course work, honors, volunteer experience, work experience and other information suitable to the position, Nish said. Then, remember to be brief.

"A resume must be concise, clean and easy to read," Nish said.

A resume should contain action verbs, Nish said, but not complete sentences. "I" is understood and makes the resume appear less factual. For example, "Supervised three employees" is preferable to "I supervised three employees."

Use dollar amounts and specific values when describing experience to enhance the meaning of accomplishments, Nish said.

"You can't assume an employer is going to make a leap of faith. Any time you leave an employer open to make decisions, they won't," Nish said.

"Always send a cover letter when responding to job

See Resume, page 11

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# EMPLOYMENT OPTIONS

## UNO service aids students

By Lori Safranek

Persistence and hard work are the most important aspects of a job search, according to Nancy Nish, director of UNO's Career Planning and Placement Services.

"That means accepting rejection as part of the process and not personalizing it," Nish said.

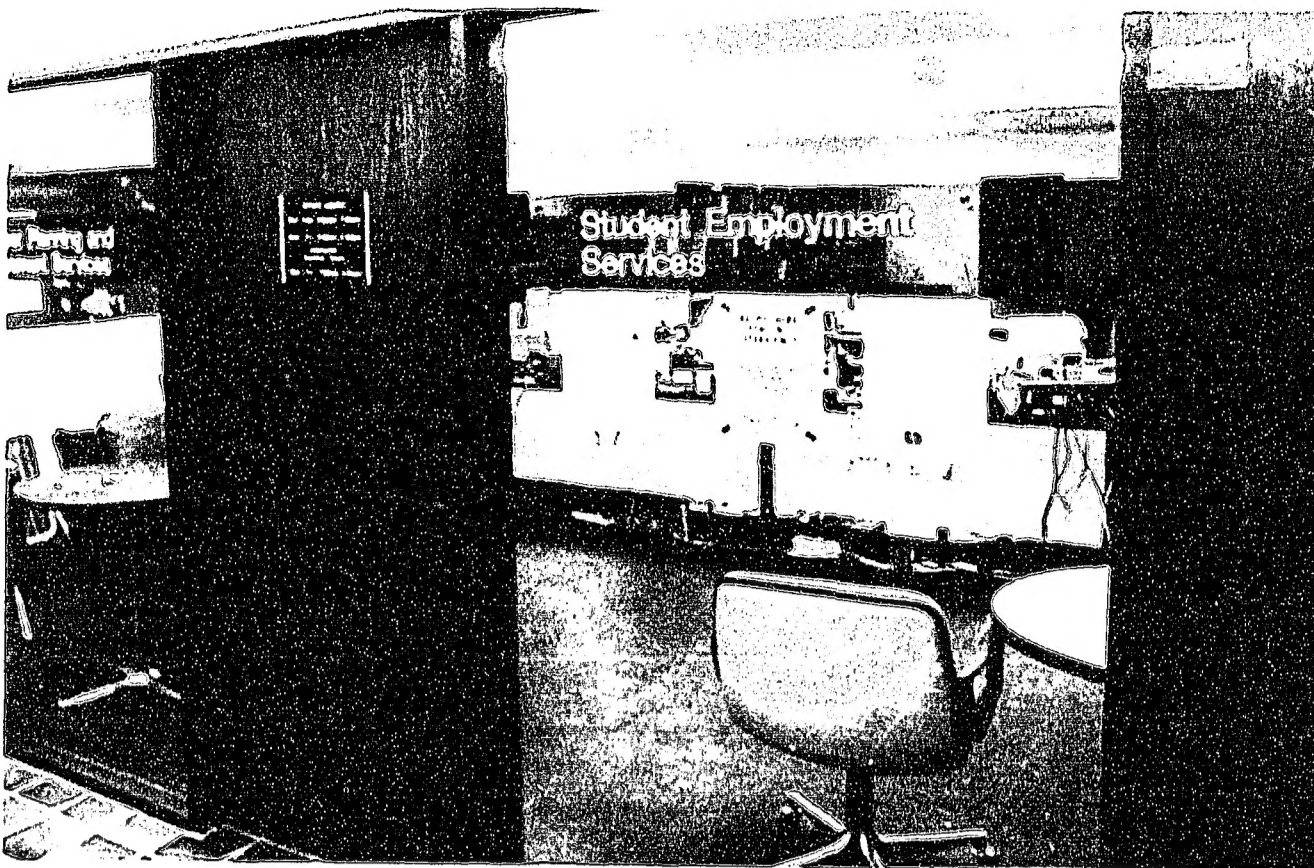
The hard work involves networking, writing resumes, interviewing, learning to dress appropriately, reading the want ads and researching the "hidden job market."

Nish said many job applicants are disorganized and don't do enough to look for a job.

"Usually, I find a lot of people doing a very haphazard job search," she said. "Probably the more diverse resources used by a student, the better their job search is going to be."

One resource UNO students can take advantage of is the Career Planning and Placement Services, located in Room 111 of the Eppley Administration Building.

Students can discuss career opportunities with a counselor, get information about employment trends and career fields, attend career preparation seminars, participate in on-



—Ed Carlson

See Careers, page 8

UNO's Career Planning and Placement Services is located in Room 111 of the Eppley Building.

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# FASHION

## Dress for success: Looking good could land you a job

By Tim Rohwer

OK, you're getting ready for that big job interview.

Let's see, your resume is in order. Good. Your portfolio with work samples and recommendations is complete. Great.

It seems as if you're all set, right? Not quite. Have you looked in the mirror?

Selecting the appropriate attire and grooming techniques is as important for an interview as qualifications or responses to employer questions, according to Lois Deily, counselor in UNO's Career Planning and Placement Services.

"Proper dress is important because many employers make their decision about hiring during the first minute of an interview," Deily said. "First impressions count. A professional appearance has a strong impact whether a student will be considered for a job. If you make a poor impression, employers may not even get to your qualifications."

Spending a fortune on interview attire is not necessary, Deily said, but the clothes should have quality.

"You don't need a \$400 suit, but you do need to be dressed appropriately. There's nothing wrong with shopping at sales," she said.

Suits are just as appropriate for women as for men, Deily said, although women should never wear a red suit for an interview.

"For women, a conservative dress and jacket is appropriate. The jacket should be light blue or gray or a muted plaid. Men should wear a white or light blue shirt with a jacket, tie and dress slacks. You need to think conservative. The conservative look never goes out of style."

"Women should wear their make-up very light. Men with facial hair should have it neatly trimmed."

Strong perfumes or colognes should be avoided, she added.

While a first impression is important, Deily said, apparel worn to follow-up interviews should be taken even more seriously.

"The second interview is even more important because it's during this period that you usually meet more important people," she said.

The following is a list of other suggestions Deily recommended for the appropriate interview look.

### *Tips for men and women*

- Dress for your interviewer — some occupations are more conservative and formal than others.

"Occupations like banking and accounting are very conservative," Deily said. "(In) occupations like advertising, public relations — those that are more creative and relaxed — you could afford to be more flamboyant."

- You should be comfortable in your interviewing apparel. Don't break it in at the interview.

- Shoes should be polished and well-maintained.

- Do not wear sunglasses or chew gum during an interview.

- Leave coats, hats, umbrellas and other such accessories in the outer office or with the receptionist when you interview.

### *Tips for women*

- Avoid dangling earrings or bracelets. Small-scale jewelry in moderation is fine.

- Fingernails should be well-manicured; if you wear polish, choose a clear or light shade.

- Skirts are considered appropriate interviewing attire. Pants are too informal.

- Wearing hosiery is a must. Neutral or dark hosiery is appropriate; avoid pastels or colors.

- Closed-toe pumps in neutral or dark colors are the best choice for shoes.

- If you carry a briefcase, do not carry a purse.

### *Tips for men*

- Wear appropriate dress shoes with dark, calf-length stockings. Either tie or slip-on styles of shoes are acceptable. No cowboy boots.

- Fingernails must be clean and trimmed.

- Jewelry should be kept to a minimum; a professional-looking wristwatch and a ring are fine.

- Don't carry a briefcase unless you have additional information to supply to the interviewer, such as a portfolio of your work. If you are only carrying a resume, consider a leather folder.



Proper attire for a job interview can make the difference, says Lois Deily of UNO's Career Planning and Placement Services. First impressions are important.

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# JOBS IN THE AREA

## Graduation means change

By Elizabeth Merrill

Most college students expect to find a job in their desired field after graduation.

Two recent UNO graduates have found that career plans often are meant to change.

Before receiving her diploma, Paula Rejda, a 1990 UNO graduate, had hoped to obtain an entry-level, \$25,000-a-year position in marketing. Twelve months later, she had netted more than \$30,000 in her first year's pay as a business services specialist at Computerland, a nationwide computer vendor.

Rejda said her double major in marketing and management information systems assisted her in obtaining the job.

"With two majors, I had not only one option, but three," she said. "I could get a job in marketing, management information systems, or a combination of both, which is exactly what I got."

Rejda, who graduated with a 2.9 grade point average, said it was her "inner marketability" that landed her the job. One example of this was how she approached her interview.

"I think that the interview is the most important aspect of securing a position in the job market today," she said.

In order to prepare for her interview, Rejda researched the company, including her prospective interviewer. When she uncovered a newspaper clipping about the interviewer during her research, she made a copy of it and brought it to the interview.

"It's important to make a good first impression," Rejda said. "Doing research shows that you're interested in the company. It's impressive. And you have to do whatever you can to impress them."

A perusal of UNO graduate Tim Kaldahl's resume might impress most prospective employers.

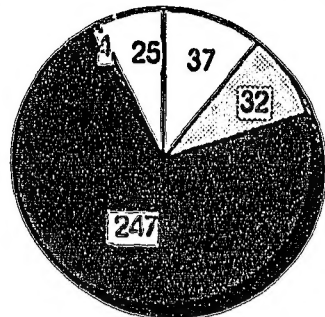
The 1990 graduate was a member of the National Collegiate Honors Council and spent a semester living in New York City, where he worked with the press corps at the United Nations. He also worked at KKAR radio and as news editor of the *Gateway*.

His credentials helped him to obtain a job at the *Papillion Times* newspaper as a staff writer. A year and a half later, Kaldahl has decided to leave his job and is headed to Czechoslovakia to direct National Collegiate Honors Council students for four months.

Kaldahl said although he was "giving up a 'real job' for a shot in the dark," he missed the interaction with other students.

"I don't know what I'm going to be doing in 1993," he said.

Employment Status of May 1990 UNO Grads



(Numbers indicate number of graduates)

- ☐ Graduate school/Continuing education (10.7%)
- ☐ Employed part time (9.3%)
- ☐ Employed full time (71.6%)
- ☐ Not seeking employment (1.2%)
- ☐ Seeking Employment (7.2%)

—Graph by Daniel Crawford

"I just like the idea of being around students again."

After his trip to Czechoslovakia, Kaldahl said, he may return to the classroom to attend graduate school.

A recent survey of UNO 1990 graduates, conducted by Career Planning and Placement Services, revealed that more than 10 percent of those who responded currently are attending graduate school. Eighty percent of those who responded said their employment was commensurate with their skills and educational preparation at UNO.

Kaldahl and Rejda agreed on the importance of building a resume while in college by partaking in internships and joining school clubs.

"Internships are very valuable and the experience is worthwhile," Kaldahl said. "If you don't have the (experience), stay in another year."

"I think there are several advantages to joining clubs," Rejda said. "You can make contacts in the field you are interested in, and it gives you a taste of what is out there in the real business world."

## UNO grads work

By Lori Safranek

Many UNO students work to pay tuition and other expenses. In fact, a majority of students work, according to Rick Carlson, director of Student Employment Services.

Recent surveys have shown 85 percent of UNO students work either part-time or full-time, Carlson said. That number is higher than the traditional college population, according to Carlson, where employment rates are at about 40 percent to 45 percent.

"That number is continuing to increase," he said, based on the current economic situation in the United States.

Nancy Nish, director of UNO's Career Planning and Placement Services said Omaha-area employers are anxious to hire UNO students and graduates.

"I get bits and pieces of comments from employers," Nish said. "For the most part, they're positive responses to our students, and that's a positive sign because they (employers) keep calling us back."

Carlson said he has had employers tell him they would rather call UNO's Student Employment than put an advertisement in the newspaper. A newspaper ad often pulls in 50 to 100 applicants, Carlson said, while Student Employment helps students decide if they are qualified before applying.

"A lot of the job ads have very specific requirements," Carlson said. "If you meet eight out of 10, you might want to apply, but if you meet two out of 10, you probably don't want to apply."

Nish said a recent survey conducted by Career Planning and Placement showed 85 percent of UNO graduates obtained employment in either Nebraska or Omaha, and 80 percent were employed in Omaha.

"A lot of them want to stay in Omaha — I think that's a good thing," Nish said. "There are jobs available — I think that's a good thing, too."

Nish said this situation may be unique to UNO, since many students have established families and homes in Omaha and are reluctant to leave.

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# JOBS IN THE AREA

## Entry level hard to get with corporate giants

By Daren Schrat

What are the big companies looking for in applicants? How much experience does an applicant need to be considered for employment?

The recession has affected the corporate giants. General Motors laid off blue collar and white collar personnel. Many corporations have faced first-time layoffs, such as IBM. So, finding a "cushy" job on executive row has been more difficult than ever before.

In the Omaha area, one of the more notable employers is ConAgra. Many UNO students would like to have the opportunity to work there at least in an entry-level, on-the-job training position. However, ConAgra is not a training company, according to Susan Harding of ConAgra's Frozen Foods division.

"We have very few entry-level positions, like Proctor and Gamble. Traditionally, we are looking for people with experience," she said.

Harding said when ConAgra moved its corporate headquarters from St. Louis to Omaha, there was a tremendous flow of job applicants. She said ConAgra would like to do more entry-level hiring, and from time to time a few internships in research and development, food science and technology, and packaging engineering are available to students on a part-time and temporary basis. Some internships lead to full-time employment, she said.

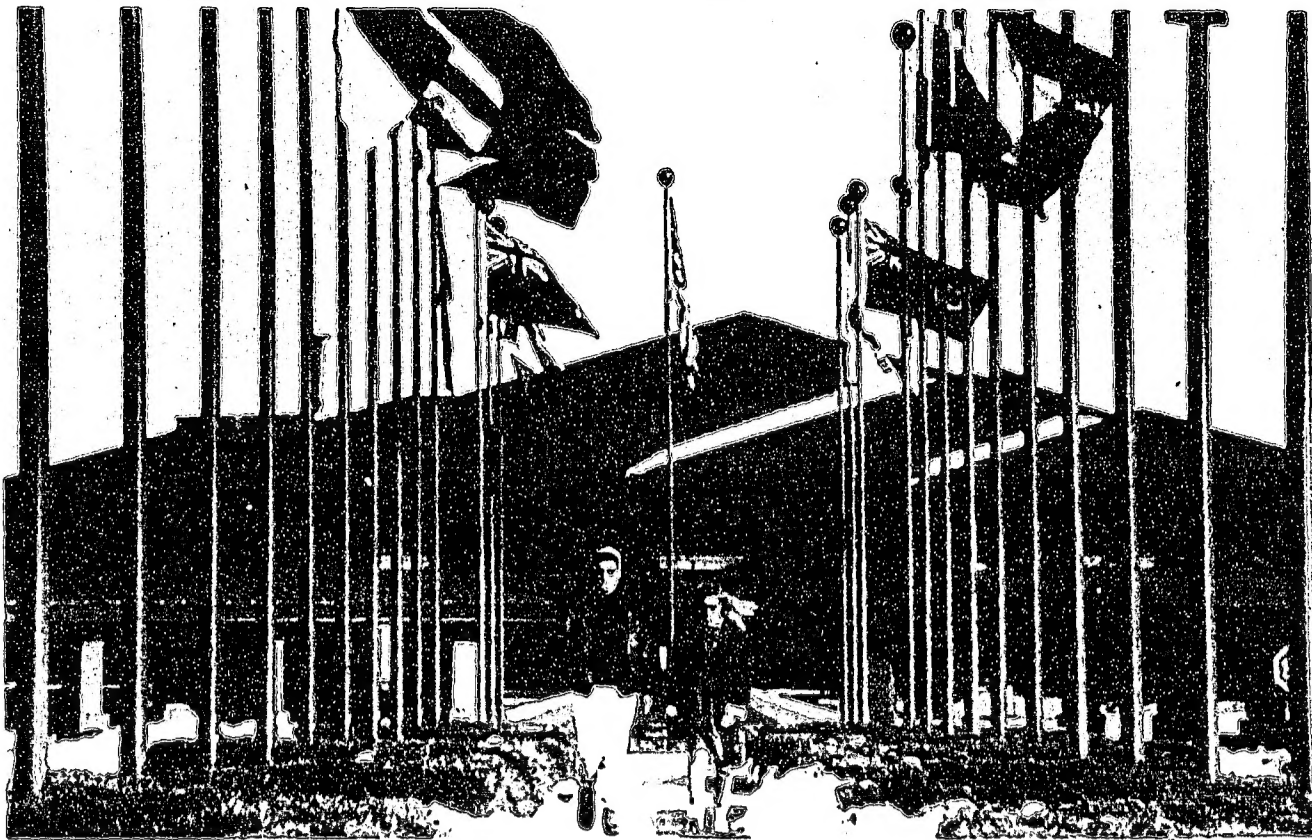
"Right now there are fewer openings due to a competitive business environment," she said.

The type of requirements a ConAgra job candidate needs depends on the position sought, but Harding said in most cases two years of experience is necessary.

So why does ConAgra participate in UNO job fairs when experience is required for employment?

"The campus asks ConAgra to try and participate, and we'd like to familiarize students with the opportunities at ConAgra after they have gained some working experience," Harding said.

Physicians Mutual Insurance Company has not been affected by the recession like many other companies,



—Eric Francis

Working for Con-Agra often requires two years of experience. Other companies provide entry-level employment.

representatives said.

"Actually, the recession has not affected us at all. We've been adding to our staffs," Senior Employment Specialist Lori Scherling said.

Overall, she said, the types of degrees Physicians Mutual is looking for are in business and marketing, and the requirements simply depend on the job.

"We're looking for someone with a good, strong work ethic, someone who is not just filling in time. We want someone who

will be loyal and dedicated to the company; someone who will give 100 percent," she said.

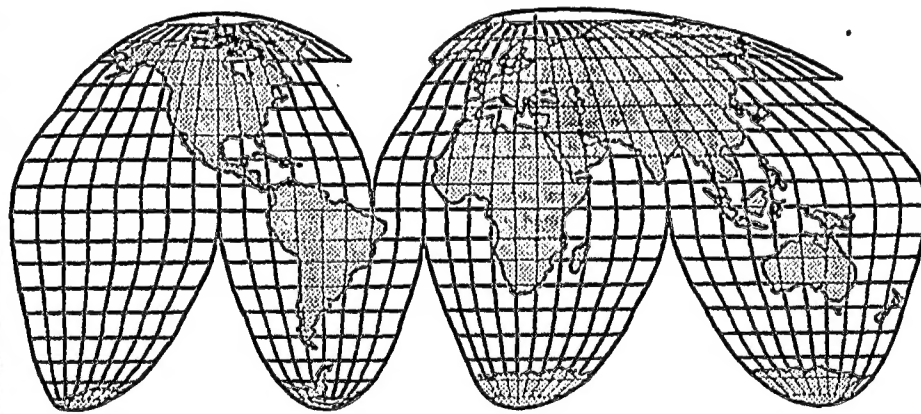
Scherling said Physicians Mutual takes an individual's performance reviews into consideration — above seniority — when promoting within. This means young workers can move up the ladder if they are determined and dedicated enough.

"An employee's length of time is considered if they have the skills and determination we're looking for when we're promoting within," she said.

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# EMPLOYMENT OPTIONS

Agencies provide options

## Job seekers turn to temps

By Amy Bull

Finding a summer job to help pay for college and other expenses may be tough in a tight job market, but temporary employment may be an option.

Students who may have a difficult time finding permanent jobs this summer should know that temporary agencies are always hiring, said Nancy Sullivan, branch manager of Manpower Temporary Services.

"We like to hire college students because they're dependable," Sullivan said.

Connie Tunender, service manager at CDI Temporary Services, said the company sends a recruitment letter to UNO every other week.

"We're looking for students who want to work and are energetic," she said.

Rick Carlson, supervisor of UNO's Student Employment Services, said temporary employees are always needed.

"Temporary business is booming these days. We get calls frequently," Carlson said. "Agencies call us on a regular basis."

"Sometimes the agencies call the day before or the morning of to get a student. If a student checked with us every morning, we would have something," he said.

Dee Felici, senior supervisor at Kelly Temporary Services, said temporary services cannot guarantee a certain number of hours per week.

"We usually assign eight-hour shifts, Monday through Friday, but we can't always guarantee there will be work."

"We will place an order with Student Employment if we have a particular project," she said.

Temporary employees fill in when there is a vacancy due to

vacation or sickness, she added.

Most jobs available are clerical, light industrial and general labor, Sullivan said. Light industrial jobs include packaging or working on a production line.

"A lot of companies are looking for general labor like unloading trucks, construction and janitorial," she said.

Felici said a demand for high-level secretarial skills such as word processing and medical terminology also exists.

Even though demand for students is high, Carlson said, Student Employment is not as actively involved with the temporary agencies as they would like.

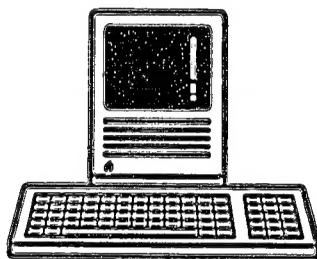
"Their typical worker doesn't necessarily meet the description of a UNO student," he said. "Students have so many expenses — tuition, rent and whatever — that they need a more secure source of income. Rarely do they use temporary jobs as their sole source of income. Sometimes they need the extra income to make ends meet or if they're

between jobs."

If students want temporary work, Carlson added, Student Employment may be able to help.

**"Temporary business is booming these days. Agencies call us on a regular basis."**

**—Rick Carlson, UNO Student Employment Services**



From Careers, page 4

campus interviews with employers and receive direct referrals to employers, Nish said. All eligible candidates who wish to use these services may register with Career Planning and Placement during their senior year.

Nish said there are also career days, such as "From the Academic to the Corporate World Day", which bring employers, alumni and students together. A career fair is held each semester, usually in September and March, and all students are eligible to attend.

Nish stressed the idea of networking, where job seekers use their contacts with professional groups, campus personnel, professors and others related to their field as part of their job search.

Nish said many UNO students have an advantage in that they worked at internships or part-time jobs in their field.

"That's the beauty of a lot of UNO folks' backgrounds," she said. Contacts made and experience earned at these positions can help the post-graduation job search.

"You have to cover a lot of bases," Nish said. "Most of them (job-seekers) need to be doing something toward their career goals."

One relatively unknown aspect of the job search is what Nish referred to as the "hidden job market."

"Most positions are not formerly advertised," she said. "They're word-of-mouth, they're from professional organizations; that's how the job search gets started. By the time jobs are advertised in the *Omaha World-Herald*, that might be the last resource."

Nish said the key to using the hidden job market is to identify the organizations most likely to match the applicant, regardless of if a job has been advertised or not.

"They may find that all of a sudden they need to hire you, without ever even posting a job listing," she said.

Nish also suggested keeping an eye on the business page of the newspaper, looking for job trends which could indicate further employment possibilities.

"They aren't necessarily advertising jobs, but they'll give you a real good clue to the potential (of) hiring trends."

Nish said job-seekers should be wary of employment services, although she said she considers them to be a part of the job search process.

"You just need to know what you're getting into," she said.

Agencies that charge fees should be a last resort, although agencies which do not charge fees may mean a lower starting salary since the employer is absorbing the agency's fee.



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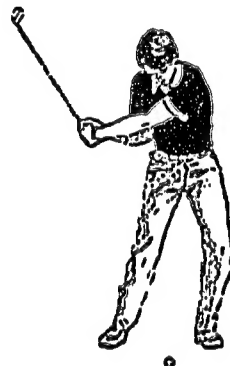
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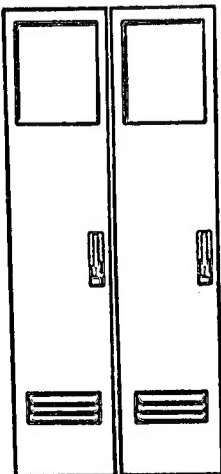
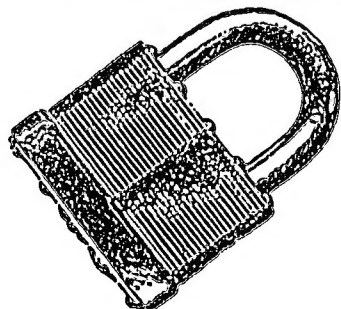
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# JOB FAIR

From writing resumes to getting job leads

## Career fairs offer more than information

By Elizabeth Tape

About 60 employers will gather at Ak-Sar-Ben May 21 for the Career Information Fair organized by Gerry Phaneuf and his company, Career Centers, Inc.

Co-sponsored by UNO's graduate studies department, the all-day fair is intended to serve the needs of employers and of individuals searching for a job or considering a career change, Phaneuf said.

"It's designed as a networking opportunity serving individuals at various stages in the career development process. This includes the job searcher, both entry-level and experienced, those seeking guidance and advice regarding a possible career change, and those seeking to enhance their job-searching skills," he said.

Many benefits exist for those who attend, Phaneuf said.

"There are no interviews being conducted, but the fair can lead to interviews," he said. "It's a wonderful process because it gives people the opportunity to inquire, to find out

what the company does, to pick up literature about the organization, to find out if it's a good match for them. We bring people, employers and information together."

Phaneuf said the fair will provide help on an individual basis with the opportunity to give resumes to employers, and on a group basis with seminars on such issues as career development and the job market.

He said the Chamber of Commerce will give a presentation about the Omaha economy, and the Nebraska Business Development Center will address how to start a small business.

"We'll also have sessions on writing effective resumes and cover letters, successful interviewing techniques and job search strategies that get results," he said.

Phaneuf said the fair will feature a wide variety of exhibitors.

"We try to get as much variety as possible. We have colleges, graduate schools, vocational schools, as well as large corporations and small businesses — as much of a mix as we can get in there to help as many

people as possible," he said. "It's a wonderful and effective way to get a lot of information from a lot of companies."

Although most of the represented organizations originate in Omaha, Phaneuf says employers from other regions attend the event.

"We do reach out to South Dakota and to some Iowa organizations, and we're trying to branch out to other organizations of Nebraska. For instance, we'll be trying to get the Chambers of Commerce from places like Kearney and North Platte to bring some employers with them from their regions," he said. "We want this to be a regional fair because the people attend from all over Nebraska."

Many companies have returned to the fair during the 14 years he has been organized it, Phaneuf said. He also strives to involve new employers each time.

"Since we have two of these fairs a year, we can get some of the same job seekers over a six-month period. You don't want to give them the same exhibitors or the same

seminars."

This year, Phaneuf said, his organization is suggesting specific questions to ask or approaches to take with potential employers.

"I think sometimes people don't know what questions to ask or how to network. For example, someone might ask a representative to describe the working environment or management style of the company, or what its long-range goals are."

Phaneuf said the fairs provide person-to-person contacts, guidance and information that are the main parts of career planning.

"We hope that it's helpful, but we'd also like to tell people, 'This is the tip of the iceberg. For every company that comes here, there are 10 more who are actively looking for people. We can help you find them.'"

The fair will be held from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The event is open to the public and free of charge.

Further information is available by calling Career Centers, Inc., at 399-2070.

## Myriad resources available at Career Centers

By Elizabeth Tape

The twists and turns of his own career have led Gerry Phaneuf into the field of career counseling.

Phaneuf said he experienced a lot of doubt about his future while attending college.

"I was a typical liberal arts student who drifted through several majors. I was essentially directionless."

Guided only by his "vague feelings of wanting to do something good for society; wanting to make some impact somewhere," Phaneuf worked for IBM for a time. Later, he found himself in the field of mental health, and ultimately as an assistant director of the career planning center at Texas Tech University. Phaneuf then went to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) to be director of its career planning and placement services office.

It was at UNL in 1987 that he was ap-

proached by the College Placement Counsel, a national organization of university career placement offices, about starting a new kind of career center.

"This was a prototype, a model program that would serve as a community-based career planning center helping people of any age. A center that would not only provide them information and assistance in establishing a career, but also support them if they're changing a career, and offer programs and services to enhance their career."

Phaneuf said the overall goal of Career Centers, Inc., is to combine services now available only in disjointed locations.

"Resources that existed in the private sector were often fragmentary. People could find a resume service, or a private employment agency, or an executive search firm, or a library, but none of it was put together in a cohesive manner."

"I think a lot of people fell through the cracks

and the services had a minimal effect on their lives. People were frustrated in their careers or in their jobs and they didn't know where to turn. In contrast, we want to be an all-encompassing resource center," Phaneuf said.

His organization differs also in to whom it directs its resources, he said.

"We want to offer our services to anyone, including individuals who have completed their formal education and can no longer gain access to their college placement centers. When people entered the work place, some found that such resources weren't geared to them as a professional person with a lot of experience."

In the Career Center's philosophy of career counseling, Phaneuf said, it emphasizes "individuals learning who they are, what they can do, what they enjoy doing and why they want to work. Knowing one's self and knowing what's happening in the job market are the keys to successful career planning."

Contributing additionally to the Career Center's uniqueness is its philosophy that career planning can be a long-term process, he said.

Eventually Phaneuf and his colleagues hope to expand outside of Omaha.

"We want to duplicate these centers nationally. Our goal is to have them in major metro areas so that the majority of people can access these centers on a regular basis no matter where they move, to have the same system to use."

Although the center aims to individualize its services for each client, certain procedures apply to all who approach the agency.

"Anyone coming into the center will go through an orientation as to what we do and our whole approach to this issue of career development. We listen to their needs we ask them some questions about what brought them to us. We're trying to determine if they're going through a major career change or simply a job change. And from there, we lay out the whole program."

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because they allow the applicant some control over the course of hiring.

Questions to expect — Kessler said 99 percent of an interview should be the employer asking questions. In reality, the employer spends 80 percent of the time talking, not asking.

This does not give applicants a lot of time to show their talents, he said.

Two questions will be asked in almost every interview, Kessler said. The first is, "What are your strengths and weaknesses?" Kessler pointed out that while it is easy to state strengths, there are at least three ways to point out weaknesses.

1. Minimize the weakness: "As I said, Mr. Jones, I am a very patient person, but not when it comes to understanding why a project comes in late."

2. The double-edged sword: "I am not very patient about understanding the problems of late projects, Ms. Jones, but I am always prepared to jump in and help complete the project."

3. Compare yourself to an ideal: "I'm not as patient as I'd like to be."

The wrong answer might be: "I don't know. I've never really thought about my weaknesses."

The second question is: "Where will you be in five years?" A good answer would be: "Mr. Jones, I can't give you the name of a position or a job title, but I can tell you that every job I have taken is with the idea of taking more responsibility, contributing more and perhaps being advanced."

Questions the applicant should ask — It is appropriate to ask questions about salary and benefits, but he suggests asking these "disqualifier statements" during the initial phone call.

The questions an applicant should ask during the actual interview should let the employer know the applicant is knowledgeable about the company itself, he said.

"The purpose of an interview is to sell yourself, not to evaluate the company," Kessler said.

Extracurricular activities — "Good advice that a lot of people don't follow is to be involved with your particular area of education," Kessler said.

Internships or volunteer work in the applicant's field of study show a true interest in that field.

"Employers don't look for wisdom and experience in beginners because they know they won't have much. What they do appreciate are indications of intentions, investments and hard work," Kessler said.

applications," she said.

The cover letter, like resumes, should have no typographical errors. It should refer to the employer's needs, not the student's needs.

The cover letter always should be addressed to a specific person in the company or organization, Nish said, and the name should be spelled correctly.

The opening paragraph is critical, she said. It should make the reader want to continue reading.

The body of the cover letter should stress the strengths and skills an applicant will bring to the job and give examples of experience or achievements that can be incorporated into that job.

The closing paragraph should ask for an interview. Be assertive, Nish said, and tell the contact person you will be calling to set up an appointment.

Make it easy for the person to contact you, she said.

• List one or two phone numbers and times you can be reached.

• The cover letter should be closed with an appropriate salutation and signed above the typed name.

If other material accompanies the cover letter, she said, all enclosures must be noted at the bottom of the cover letter.

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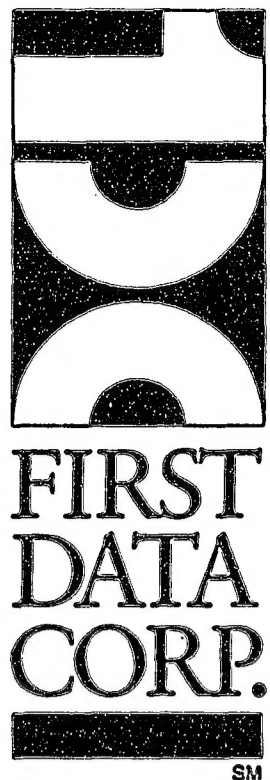
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